

MIMMO PALADINO

Ca' Pesaro, International Gallery of Modern Art

8 June - 31 July 2005

The vernissage will be held at 6.30 pm on Tuesday 7 June 2005 in the large ground-floor Entrance Hall to Ca' Pesaro.

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Organised by the Venice Museum Authority and curated by Enzo Di Martino and Flavia Scotton, the exhibition will be open to the public from 8 June to 31 July 2005. Ticket-prices and hours are those for the museum (10 am - 6pm; as usual, the ticket-office closes one hour before. Closed on Mondays).

Laid out on the ground floor of the Museum, the exhibition will comprise a sculpture garden in the courtyard with six large-scale works created for the occasion, and 15 large works on paper in the two side rooms (these too are being exhibited for the first time).

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One of the most important figures of the so-called *Transavanguardia*, Mimmo Paladino first established his international reputation in the *Aperto* section of the 1980 Biennale. Now he returns once more to Venice with some twenty pieces that include large-scale sculptures and works on paper. All produced for the occasion, these illustrate the latest phase in the artist's work, their powerful and impelling forms so recognisably exemplifying Paladino's intriguingly archaic imaginative world.

The sculpture includes a four-metre-high tower in terracotta; a large five-metre-diameter disk in the same material (a homage to Beuys) and a bronze horse some three metres high which will stand on the steps giving onto the Grand Canal. With their dense weave of mysterious signs and indecipherable figures, the works on paper provide one with further insight into the artist's use of the medium of paint.

Mimmo Paladino was born at Paduli (Benevento) on 18 December 1948. In 1964 he visited the Venice Biennale and was powerfully impressed by the work of Rauschenberg. His own first exhibitions came in 1968, whilst in 1973 he would start employing a mixed technique in works that combined a complex iconography and extraordinarily composite meanings. Having moved to Milan in 1977, he would in 1980 exhibit at the *Aperto* Section of the Venice Biennale alongside Chia, Clemente, Cucchi and De Maria. Exhibitions the following year in London, Basle and Hannover would launch his international reputation. In 1982 he exhibited at *Documenta 7* in Kassel and at the Sydney Biennale. His first retrospective came in 1985, the same year that he produced *Pietre*, the first of his long series of figures in white stone. In 1988 a room at the Venice Biennale was dedicated to his work. The large one-man exhibition held at the Prague Castle would come in 1991, the same year in which he completed a new cycle of twelve paintings on wood entitled *Il respiro della bellezza*. In 1992 he created the large permanent installation *Hortus Conclusus* in the cloister of San Domenico in Benevento. That same year there was a large exhibition of his works from the period 1970-1992, which would travel around five major museums in Brazil. In 1993 he held a large one-man show at Forte Belvedere in Florence and in 1994 was the first contemporary Italian artist to hold an exhibition in China, at the National Gallery of Fine Arts in Beijing. Since that year he has lived and worked in Bologna, also producing work that explore the possibilities of the graphic medium (*Ulysses*, 21 etchings after Joyce). 1995-1996: a large exhibition of his work was held in various venues within Naples. In 1999 he held a large show at the South London Galley which included *Testimoni*, a groups of twenty figures in white Vicenza and Zenith stone, a series of works in mixed media on aluminium, and an installation, *I Dormienti*, in a brick 'grotto' under The Roundhouse at Chalk Farm (the music accompanying it was by Brian Eno). This same year he was also appointed a Companion of Honour of the Royal Academy. In 2000 Paladino designed the sets for *Oedipus Rex* at the Rome Teatro Argentina (director: Mario Martone), winning the *Premio Ubu*. In 2001 he produced illustrations for Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey* (2 vols. Florence, Le Lettere) and a general catalogue of his graphics, edited by Enzo Di Martino, was published by Art of this Century (New York- Paris). In 2002-2003, the 'Luigi Pecci' Centro di Arte Contemporanea in Prato dedicated to him the most complete retrospective exhibition ever organised by an Italian museum.

2003: *Transavanguardia 1979-1985* at the 'Castello di Rivoli' Museo di Arte Contemporanea. In 2004 Paladino again did the set designs for a production of *Oedipus Rex* directed by Mario Martone, this time at the Teatro di Roma. That same year the works he produced together with Sol Lewitt were exhibited in the Galleria Nazionale d'Arte in Rome; and as part of the *Terrae Motus* project, he held a one-man show in the Caserta Palace and others in Naples and Rome. 2004-2005 'Pinocchio', a travelling exhibition of work, visited the modern art galleries of six Japanese cities and then moved to the eighteenth-century Scola dei Battitori in Venice (volume and catalogue by Papiro Arte Edizioni). 2005: The Loggetta Lombardesca in Ravenna holds a large exhibition of his works for the theatre entitled *Paladino in Scena*. After Ca' Pesaro, in December a show of work inspired by Cervantes' *Don Quixote* is envisaged for the Museo di Capodimonte in Naples.

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